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ABSTRACT

The study analyzed support patterns for two predominant "liberal" development strategies ("growth centers" and the consolidation of government services) among elites from communities in a largely underdeveloped rural region of Wisconsin. Analytic focus was twofold: (1) to assess overall levels of support among community elites, and (2) to compare the magnitude of elite support, where possible, with that of a random sample of residents from the same region. The social and ideological bases of community elite support for liberal development policies were also examined and relevant comparisons made with 231 community elites in 32 communities ranging in size from approximately 1,000 to 50,000 residents. Respondents were chosen by a combination of the "positional" and "reputational" methods of selecting community leadership. Data on growth center policy preferences among a random sample of four Northwest Wisconsin counties, bordering that of the community elites, were collected during the summer of 1973. Some findings were: community elites and non-elites in the Northwest region were divided on the policy of implementing growth centers; elites strongly favored consolidation of service delivery by community and county governments; and growth centers were more favored by community elites and low income, nonfarm families. (NQ)

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SUPPORT FOR "LIBERAL" DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AMONG COMMUNITY ELITES IN A RURAL REGION OF WISCONSIN*

by

Frederick H. Buttel, Donald E. Johnson, and Daniel R. Klyve-Wood**

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**The authors are, respectively, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Michigan State University, and Professor and Graduate Assistant, Department of Rural Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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The rural hinterland as a focus for economic development has received considerable interest in recent years for two major reasons. American corporations have found the large metropolitan areas increasingly less profitable locations for industrial activity because of high labor costs, the fiscal problems of local governments, the high costs of pollution abatement, and other reasons (see, for example, O'Connor, 1973, 1974). Thus, many corporations have looked toward rural areas as more profitable production sites. Secondly, rural regional underdevelopment and rural poverty have been persistent concerns of government officials and social scientists, and increasing effort has been expended to help ameliorate the economic problems of the rural hinterland (Copp, 1972; Nolan and Heffernan, 1974).

Academicians and certain governmental agencies--chiefly the Economic Development Administration--have cooperated to formulate a series of solutions to rural regional underdevelopment problems which we term "liberal development policies." These liberal development policies have two major underlying characteristics: 1) the strategies revolve around extra-community governmental regulation and assistance, or local government cooperation, aimed at mitigating the undesirable spin-offs of the free market, and 2) the underlying goal is to attract private investment to selected communities and encourage private corporations to employ the unemployed and bolster the incomes of the poor. These policies are thus solidly within the American liberal tradition of state intervention to make private investment and economic expansion profitable, while hopefully improving the livelihoods of those left behind in the competitive struggles for advantage on the laissez faire market (Martinson and Schulman, 1975; Dowd, 1974).

In this paper we concern ourselves with perhaps the two predominant "liberal" development strategies which have flowed from the repertoire of liberal academicians and state bureaucrats: "growth centers" and the consolidation of government services. Our specific intent is to analyze support patterns for these development policies among a sample of elites from 32 communities in a largely underdeveloped rural region of Wisconsin. The analytic focus is twofold: We first assess overall levels of support among community elites and then compare the magnitude of elite support, where possible, with that of a random sample of residents from the same region. The social and ideological bases of community elite support for liberal development policies are then examined, and relevant comparisons with non-elites are again made.

THE BACKGROUND OF LIBERAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES FOR THE AMERICAN RURAL HINTERLAND

Despite the apparent rapidity of American economic development during the past two centuries, this development has been characteristically "uneven" (Dowd, 1974; North, 1966; Perloff, et al., 1960). Pockets of regional poverty, as well as substantial poverty within developed urban areas, have been a persistent part of the American economic landscape since the consolidation of the post-Revolutionary War nation-state. The problems of the underdeveloped rural hinterland have concerned many for humanitarian, as well as pragmatic political-economic reasons. Underdeveloped rural regions have been the breeding grounds for a variety of "extremist" socio-political movements--from both the left and the right--and are by their very nature poor markets for the manufactured products of industry (Ash, 1972;

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Johnson, 1972; Heberle, 1951; Kornhauser, 1959; McConnell, 1969). We have never been very successful in integrating those who suffer from regional economic imbalances into the polity, economy, or society, although a substantial number of potentially more successful "liberal" development strategies have been proposed and/or implemented on a trial basis.

"Growth centers" and the consolidation of government servies are two of the more promising methods currently under consideration for ameliorating rural regional underdevelopment problems. As we mentioned earlier, these strategies involve a considerable amount of (extra-community) state intervention to counteract undesirable outcomes of free market processes. As such, there is a growing agreement among sociologists, economists, political scientists, and planners that problems of rural poverty, underdevelopment, and maldistribution of population will fail to improve, or will become worse, unless government influences the operation of the market (see, for example, Maki and Berry, 1966; Pulver, 1970; Tweeten, 1974; Donohue, 1974; Heady, 1974; Maki, 1973).

In light of the obvious political obstacles involved in direct corporate repayment for their past direct and indirect exploitation of rural communities, the rural poor, and the non-renewable rural resource base (see, for example, Caudill, 1970; Padfield, 1971; Fujimoto and Zone, 1974), contemporary architects of rural regional development policy envision state subsidization of corporate production within rural areas as the only feasible option. The thrust of liberal development policies is to encourage production in selected rural or small metropolitan cities, but not directly legislate the locational decision of individual firms.

The "growth centers" concept refers to designating a community as a center for public investment in infrastructure and services so as to make the given community clearly more preferable for industrial location than neighboring, nongrowth center communities. The general principle involved is that communities of a certain minimum size and wealth produce more return to capital than smaller, less affluent communities. Public investment in growth center communities--along with tax break incentives to interested corporations--is argued to generate substantial "multiplier" or "spread effects" and self-sustaining economic growth. The larger growth center places are anticipated to result in economies of scale and economic benefits out toward the periphery. Also, the revival of the "micropolitan" (Tweeten, 1974) community as a center of profitable capital accumulation is suggested to contribute to a more balanced distribution of the national population.

The designation of certain communities as growth centers is considered necessary for several reasons (although these communities are already, in theory, the more attractive sites for private investment). First, it is felt the official--presumably statutory--designation of particular communities as growth centers aids in the coordination of subsidies and incentives, and assures the maximum efficiency of invested public capital. Secondly, many professional observers see intense competition among numerous communities for prospective industry--competition leading to deleterious overcapitalization of communities and less than optimal economies of scale and regional spread effects (see, for example, Colorado Rural Development Commission, 1972; Hansen, 1971, 1972; Cumberland, 1971, for further details on "growth center" policies in the U.S. and abroad).

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The consolidation of government services is a first cousin of growth center policies. The basic nature of service consolidation strategies is multi-community or multi-county cooperation in the funding, administration, and delivery of services such as medical services, land use planning and zoning, abatement of pollution "residuals," education, and solid waste disposal. Obviously, some of these services are relevant to the location decisions of individual firms, while others are aimed more directly at the health and welfare of target populations. Nevertheless, the assumption is that the provision of services by governmental units larger than the local community will be somewhat more efficient, again through economies of scale and better employment of often underutilized facilities. Thus, communities that cooperate on service delivery and administration will be more attractive for private investment because more tax monies can be allocated to providing services--particularly industrial parks--of most immediate interest to prospective industry (see, especially, Maki, 1974). Clearly, a growth center community which shares its service burdens with other communities is a tempting site for new corporate production. In theory, the combination of these two liberal development policies would do much to relieve rural underdevelopment and rural poverty problems--if only the people would go along with the idea (see, for instance, Tweeten, 1974; and Pulver, 1970, regarding local opposition to such policies).

Support patterns among community elites for liberal development policies are thus vital components of the potential success of these policies. Presumably, active elite opposition to the well-intentioned plans of academicians and public administrators would doom these liberal development policies to, at best, half-hearted cooperation. The policy preferences of nonelites are

clearly less influential in policy success, because citizen input, if any, into public policy formation tends to be inconsequential (see Warren, 1972: 394,395), again despite the well-intentioned efforts on the part of some public administrators. Nevertheless, the opinions of nonelites are of sociological interest in relation to community and domestic development theory.

Martinson and Schulman (1975) have investigated support for growth centers among a random sample of respondents in Wisconsin's Northwest, largely underdeveloped, region. They report less than enthusiastic support among these nonelites, with less than 50 percent of their respondents favoring the general concept of growth centers and the specific prospect of their community being designated a growth center. Martinson and Schulman also find persons most favorable to growth centers policy to be poor families living in the most economically-depressed communities--the places which clearly have no chance to become growth centers. In addition, farmers were a major locus of opposition in spite of their generally low incomes, presumably because farm families would have the least to gain from more local employment opportunities and income from manufacturing.

Although Martinson and Schulman's middle and upper-middle class respondents were quite ambivalent about growth centers, we might anticipate much more solid support for liberal development policies of all types from upper-middle class community elites.[1] Elites from the private sector could expect their firms--as well as new firms--to share in the benefits of subsidies from growth center policies and government service consolidation. Elites employed in the public sector (which, in our sample, at least, tend to occupy formal positions of community administrative or legislative power)

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would likely derive political benefits from assiting in the implementation of liberal development policies. Governmental leaders would certainly be viewed more favorably by local corporate and business elites, and those holding down newly-created jobs would feel political leaders were acting in the public interest.

Indeed, we may anticipate resistance to liberal development policies among community elites to perhaps derive more from ideology than the threatening of personal interests. As Pulver (1970) has pointed out, underdeveloped rural communities tend to be major loci of "traditional" values where state regulation of the economy and assistance to the poor are rejected on laissez-faire principles. Pulver argues that a major barrier to the implementation of liberal solutions to the problems of rural communities is the "conservatism" prelalent there.

The two principal axes of political ideology of interest concerning liberal development policies are "welfare-state" and state regulation of business ideologies (see, for example, Dolbeare and Dolbeare, 1971; McCloskey, et al., 1960; Free and Cantril, 1968). The belief in the appropriateness of state action to benefit the poor is clearly immediate to growth centers and service consolidation support. Elites who reject the legitimacy of the welfare-state are likely to ideologically oppose state action regarding the two present strategies for alleviating rural poverty--regardless of the potential benefits to the community leader and his/her community. The other axis of ideology--the legitimacy of state regulation of business activity--occupies an ambivalent status with respect to liberal development policies. While growth centers and consolidation of government services imply a legitimate role of the state in the economy, those who support such policies are

likely not critical of the performance of corporations (since, for example, growth centers and consolidation of government services are directly or indirectly aimed at attracting industry to and helping it prosper within the host community). Thus, we anticipate no discernible relation between support for liberal development policies and political ideologices supporting state action to regulate business, because this ideology is somewhat peripheral to what amounts to state subsidization of business.

Nevertheless, interests of community elites may enter into growth center policy preferences. Remembering that only a few communities in a large region are likely to become growth centers, we suspect that support for a neighboring community being a growth center (if the home community was not so designated) would be met with more hostility than one's own community being chosen. Also, if we assume that community elites will be generally quite favorable to growth centers and service consolidation policies, it is likely that elites from the communities with the greatest potential to become growth centers and receive the concommitant benefits will be especially favorable toward these policies. Thus, two contextual characteristics of elites' communities--community size and community socioeconomic status--should be positively related to favoring growth center policy. No such relationship is predicted with respect to the consolidation of government services since there is no extra-community selection procedure by which certain communities must be left behind in the quest for development.

We suggested above that the occupations of community elites would be unrelated to support for growth centers and service consolidation policy because both privately- and publically-employed elites conceivably may both benefit from policy implementation. Education and income should be likewise unrelated, despite the pervasiveness of social class indicators in explaining

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support for the bulk of major public policies (Collins, 1975). Although we argued for relationships between ideology and liberal development policy support, it is unlikely that there are major political party differences. There are rather hazy correlations between ideology and political party in the United States (Hamilton, 1972; Converse, 1964), plus supporters of liberal development policies are hardly drawn from the "left." Even though supporters are probably liberal vis-a-vis the welfare-state, they are clearly not critical of the capitalist system and the role of private business in the economy. In addition to political party identification, we include age as a congrol variable because of its relationships with various "conservative" attitudes in other studies (Milbrath, 1965); Lipset, 1963). Another variable of interest is support for environmental reform, particularly with respect to growth centers. Those favoring environmental reform are likely to be ambivalent about any strategy of economy growth--particularly in their own community.

A last control variable of concern to this inquiry pertains primarily to growth centers policy. The growth centers strategy of rural development is quite new to West Central Wisconsin, our study area. We, therefore, include a variable measuring previous knowledge of growth centers proposals to determine if familiarity with the issue enhances support among community elites. By contrast, the consolidation of government services is quite pervasive in the study area. Each community is already engaged in one or more cooperative service arrangements, although semi-autonomous multi-community administrative units have yet to appear in this region of Wisconsin.

DATA AND METHOD

Sample

The data for this research were collected from personal interviews of 231 community elites in 32 small- and medium-sized Wisconsin communities. The community centers (villages and cities) ranged in size from approximately 1,000 residents to 50,000 residents. The "sample," in effect, is the universe of leaders of all communities with 1,000 or more residents in 10 West Central Wisconsin counties. The interviewing was conducted from November, 1973 to January, 1974.

Respondents for the interview were chosen by a combination of the "positional" and "reputational" methods of selecting community leadership (see, for example, Aiken and Mott, 1970). "Positional" leaders, e.g., mayor, chamber of commerce president, etc., were interviewed and asked for their personal estimations of those reputed to be the most powerful and influential in the community. The total number of nominations were talled, and persons with the most nominations were selected as interview respondents (see also, Powers, 1965).

The number of respondents per community varied by size of the community. The maximum number of respondents in a community was 25, in the case of cities with over 50,000 residents. The minimum was five respondents for villages with 2,500 or less population. Of the 238 respondents selected for interviews, 231 furnished completed interviews for a response rate of approximately 97 percent. Nonresponse appears to have been quite representatively distributed across community size categories.

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The study area is located in the West Central region of Wisconsin and exhibits considerable variability in socioeconomic conditions. The ten counties comprising the study area range in median family income (in 1970) from $7,199 to $9,924. Population growth rates of these counties from 1960-1970 range from -3.7 percent to 46.2 percent. The region may be termed an agricultural area, although all of the sample communities are substantial trade centers. Each community is an incorporated place, and most have at least one manufacturing enterprise. Only one of the elites chosen for interviewing reported his main occupation (or pre-retirement occupation) as a farmer.

The respondents were primarly middle-aged, white males. Only 6.9 percent of the respondents were over age 65, 2.2 percent were women, and all respondents were Caucasian. About 42 percent of the respondents were self-employed businesspersons, 32.5 percent were employees of a commercial or industrial enterprise, and 19.1 percent reported government employment at the local, state or federal levels. The remainder (16.9 percent) were unemployed housewives, clergy, retired, or farmers. The respondents were a highly educated group, averaging nearly 16 years of formal education. They also had large incomes, with only 6.6 percent reporting incomes of less than $10,000 per year. About 30 percent reported annual family incomes in excess of $30,000.

In this study we will utilize Martinson and Schulman's (1975) data on growth center policy preferences among a random sample of four Northwest Wisconsin counties. These data were collected during the summer months of 1973. The random sample study area borders that of the community elites. Fortunately, there is one county in common between these two studies --

St. Croix County. Therefore, we will compare both the total samples of elites and nonelites, as well as the subsamples of St. Croix County residents when assessing growth centers policy preferences. In addition, we will also compare the community elites with Martinson and Schulman's subsample of respondents whose families earn in excess of $16,000 annually to see if elites differ greatly from a random sample of other high income respondents.

Operationalization of Variables

The operational definitions of all relevant variables from the two studies are detailed in Appendix A (see also Martinson and Schulman, 1975; and Lambert, et al., 1974 for further information on the random sample survey of Northwest Wisconsin).

RESULTS

Support for Growth Centers Development Policy Among Community Elites and Non-Elites

Data comparing community elites and non-elites on support for the general growth centers development strategy appear in Table 1. Community leaders are clearly more favorable toward establishing a growth center policy in Northwest Wisconsin than the rank-and-file citizenry. Over 75 percent of the community elites favor growth centers, compared to less than 50 percent of Martinson and Schulman's (1975) random sample of four Northwest Wisconsin counties. Restricting attention to the one county represented in both surveys--St. Croix County--does notheing to alter our conclusion. Elites from St. Croix County communities are much more favorable toward growth centers than the county's random sample of non-elites (82 and 47 percent, respectively).

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These differences are even more pronounced when community elites are compared with Martinson and Schulman's (1975) respondents whose families earn in excess of $16,000 annually (see Table 1). These high income families are much less likely--even less so than the general citizenry--to favor growth centers policy than community leaders. Clearly, occupying a position of power in a local community places growth centers policy in a different light than if the high income family is uninvolved in local politics.

These same differences between elites and non-elites prevail with respect to favoring the respondent's community being designated a growth center. Over 70 percent of the total sample of community elites favor their community becoming a growth center, compared to only 40 percent of the random sample of the four Northwest Wisconsin counties. Likewise, 82 percent of St. Croix County's community elites favor this policy, while only 38 percent of St. Croix County's rank-and-file citizenry favor their community as a growth center. High income respondents from the random sample were especially hostile toward a growth center designation for their own community, with only 28 percent favoring such a policy.

In Table 3 we compare the elite and non-elite samples on a third aspect of growth centers policy--designating a neighboring community a growth center, provided the respondent's home community was not. The data in Table 3 reveal some important differences of interest between the community leaders and the general citizenry when we compare their overall responses to the home community versus a neighboring community being designated a growth center. Returning to Table 2, 73 percent of the elites favor growth centers if their community is selected, while the percentage drops to 68 percent if the growth center selection process bypasses their home town. However, the non-elites

are much more favorable to growth center policy if the growth center is somewhere other than their community (64 and 40 percent, respectively, for support for a neighboring community and the home community becoming a growth center). Thus, the general citizenry may not totally object to growth centers on principle, but may feel growth center policy to be potentially disruptive in their community. On the other hand, the elites seem less interested in growth centers if the major benefits go to some other locality.

As these data suggest, there are smaller policy preference disagreements between leaders and the general population on selecting a neighboring community as a growth center than we found with respect to the home community. Nevertheless, the community elites are still somewhat more favorable to a neighboring community being a growth center than both Martinson and Schulman's (1975) total sample or their subsample of high income families (68, 64, and 63 percent, respectively). Leaders from St. Croix County communities are likewise somewhat more favorable to this policy than the rank-and-file citizenry of the county (77 and 69 percent, respectively).

In sum, we may conclude that community elites and non-elites in the rural, largely underdeveloped Northwest region of Wisconsin are divided on the policy of implementing the promising liberal development strategy, growth centers. This cleavage is most pronounced with respect to the general concept of growth centers strategy and the specific prospect of the home community being designated a growth center. The leaders are somewhat more favorable than the general citizenry to a neighboring community's designation as a growth center, if the home community was not so designated. Thus, the non-elites tend to favor growth centers if their own community is not involved, whereas the elites are somewhat more ambivalent about growth centers if their community is bypassed.

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Community Elites and Overall Support for Consolidation of Government Services

In Table 4 we present responses of the sample of community leaders to questions regarding a second component of liberal development policy--the consolidation of service delivery by community and county governments. Again, the elites are strongly in favor of such consolidation, although we unfortunately lack comparable data for non-elites. Over 70 percent of these leaders favor a general community service consolidation policy, and nearly 90 percent favor service consolidation among counties with "low growth potential."

Clearly, the community elites in Wisconsin's underdeveloped Northwest do not generally resist liberal development policies out of some fanatic "traditionalism," as Pulver (1970) fears. Indeed, they are quite strongly in favor of such policies even though their constituents are not. Nevertheless, elite opinion on liberal development policies does not add up to unanimous support, and we now turn to an examination of independent variables presumably causally related to elites' positions on development issues.

Social Bases of Elite Support for Liberal Development Policies

An initial consideration regarding support patterns for liberal development policies is the extent to which they cohere as an integrated grouping of policy preferences. Table 5 presents zero-order correlation coefficients for the relationships between responses on the three aspects of growth center policy and the two components of service consolidation. Community elite support patterns for these policies are all positively (and significantly, according to statistical test) interrelated, although the intercorrelations of growth centers policy questions are clearly the highest. Nevertheless,

service consolidation policy preferences are correlated with growth center support in all its dimensions, confirming our hypothesis that those two sorts of liberal development policies have common underlying perceptual parameters.

Since growth centers proposals have yet to be implemented in Northwest Wisconsin, and indeed are quite new to the area, we may inquire as to whether familiarity with these proposals influences policy preference. We find that the 34.6 percent of the community elites reporting previous knowledge of growth centers were no more or no less likely to favor any aspect of growth centers policy than those less familiar with the concept.[2] Thus, we may proceed with an examination of the social bases of growth centers support--as well as support for service consolidation--assured that our findings are not statistical artifacts of familiarity with growth centers development strategy.

In Table 5 we report zero-order correlation coefficients for the relationships between our liberal development policy dependent variables and the hypothesized independent variables discussed above. Considering first the effects of elites' community context on growth centers policy preferences, we find somewhat mixed relationships between respondent's community being a likely site for a growth center and his/her support for these policies. The most interesting anamole occurs with respect to community population size. Community size has only a slightly positive relationship (r=.087) to support for the general growth centers concept, a moderately low correlation (r=.147) with favoring the home community as a growth center, and a statistically significant negative relation to favoring a neighboring community as a growth center (r= -.137). These findings highlight potential conflicts over the selection of growth center sites, with elites from large communities strongly

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favoring their community's selection as a growth center, while tending to oppose a neighboring community as a growth center, provided the home community was not also chosen. A somewhat different configuration of growth centers policy interests occurs with respect to community socioeconomic status. Elites from communities with well-educated, high socioeconomic status populations tend to favor the growth centers concept and their community being a growth center (r=.141) and .118, respectively), but amvibalance enters in when the home community is hypothetically bypassed in favor of a neighboring community being designated a growth center (r=.054). Community context appears unrelated, however, to either indicator of support for community or county service consolidation, presumably because all communities--at least in theory--would benefit from an expansion and formalization of service consolidation policies.

We argued above that an elite's occupational nexus, as well as income and education, would be unrelated to liberal development policy preferences. Government employees, self-employed business persons, and salaried business employees do not differ in their policy preferences for either growth centers or government service consolidation. Age is similarly unrelated to policy preferences, despite some literature arguing the "conservatism" of the aged in general, and community elites in particular (Lowry, 1968). Nevertheless, elites with high education are somewhat opposed to all five policy indicators, although none of the relationships are large enough to be statistically significant. Community elites making high incomes, on the other hand, generally tend to favor the liberal development policies. However, the only zero-order correlation between income and policy preference that is sizable is that concerning support for the respondent's community being designated as growth center (r=.144).

We find that support for environmental reform tends to be negatively related to four of the five policy issues, with a moderately low, but statistically significant coefficient (r= -.150) prevailing in the case of support for the respondent's community being selected as a growth center. Indeed, multivariate analysis confirms that the positive correlation of education and the negative relationship of income to support for the home community as a growth center are the spurious results of the less well-educated, but highly affluent, community elites opposing environmental reform (see Costantini and Hanf, 1972, for a similar finding). Apparently, community leaders sympathetic to environmental reform tend to reject the economic growth implications of the home community as a center for public subsidization of industrial production (and the pollution and disamenities caused by industrialization).

Welfare-state liberalism is quite consistently (and positively) correlated with support for both types of development policy. Put somewhat differently, elites who reject the legitimacy of a state role in ameliorating the problems of the poor and disadvantaged tend to oppose both growth centers and government service consolidation, with these correlations being particularly strong in the case of service consolidation. However, the coefficient for the relationship between welfare-state liberalism and support for a neighboring community being a growth center is in the positive direction, but not statistically significant (r=.119). The implication again is that while ideology may play some role in determining support for liberal development policies, interest also plays a vital role. Growth centers in communities other than one's own probably help the home community's poor much less than the disadvantaged living in the actual growth center com-

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munity--as well as ensuring that one's own community will grow very little in the near future. Thus, liberal welfare-state ideology underpins support for liberal development policy when the home community benefits, but the connection is less clear when planners find another community more deserving of a growth center designation.

Even though liberal attitudes regarding the welfare-state contribute to liberal development policy support, liberal attitudes toward business--the belief that the government should more closely regulate corporations--are not associated with these policy preferences. Again, the nature of liberal development strategies involves encouraging corporations--and not coercing them--to locate in selected "micropolitan" communities in underdeveloped regions. These who support growth centers and government service consolidation, then, are not critical of business, although they are willing to accept certain forms of state intervention in the economy. Thus, liberal development policies appear to have something of a "corporate liberal" (Weinstein, 1968; Eakins, 1966) constituency, viewing development in terms of state regulation of the economy in the interests of business.

DISCUSSION

Elites from West Central Wisconsin communities are quite solidly in favor of liberal development policies, and planners should have little worry that the conservatism of entrenched elites in this underdeveloped region is preventing social change. Nevertheless, the general population is not convinced, about growth centers at least, and if they had their way there would not be growth centers in the region's future. It is also of interest to reiterate Martinson and Schulman's (1975) conclusion that it is not the working

class expressing great opposition, but primarily the middle class and farmers. Thus, growth centers appear to exhibit a surprising constituency of community elites and low income, nonfarm families.

Support for growth centers and government service consolidation are interrelated, supporting our hypothesis of common underlying policy parameters and similar constituencies. There is some amount of community elite resistance to such policies, however, and this resistance exhibits configurations of both ideology and interest. Welfare-state conservatives tend to oppose each aspect of liberal development policy, and elite opposition is most pronounced when, in the case of growth centers, the home community is bypassed as a center for socioeconomic development. In a similar vein, elites from large communities--which presumably have the greatest chance of becoming growth centers--tend to favor growth centers if their community is selected, but are less favorable to growth centers if their community is selected. Likewise, elites from high socioeconomic status communities strongly favor their community as a growth center, but are no more likely than the remainder of the sample to favor a neighboring community to be so designated. Community context is, however, unrelated to government service consolidation policy preferences.

Growth centers policy is obviously more controversial than government service consolidation, at least in terms of the present strategy of encouraging voluntary cooperative service agreements among communities and counties (and without the formation of autonomous extra-community administrative bodies). The designation or nondesignation of a given community as a growth center has tremendous implications for the community's future--its growth rate, population composition, environmental quality, and community life styles.

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The elite and nonelite data suggest differential interpretations of their community's interest and the possibility of a variety of conflicts over growth centers decision-making. At the most basic level, community elites and the general citizenry are divided over whether growth centers should even become a reality. Also, opposition to growth centers among the general population is most intense in communities likely to become growth centers (Martinson and Schulman, 1975)--large, affluent communities--while these communities' elites tend to be strongly supportive.

But assuming the likely--that state planners and community elites win out over the rank-and-file population--the region's residents may be expected to engage in lively conflicts over which communities ultimately will get the growth center designation. In general, the elites are more favorable to growth centers if their community is selected--although a sizable majority of our sample of community leaders favor growth centers even if the home community is bypassed. But in a given community we may expect a somewhat unlikely coalition of welfare-state conservatives and elites sympathetic to environmental protection opposing their community as a growth center. Thus, the implementation of a regional growth centers plan in West Central Wisconsin will not likely be a consensual process. Nevertheless, it is clear the opposition that might develop will not flow primarily from the region's "traditionalism," and we suggest that this phenomenon has been overemphasized in the American domestic development literature.

Indeed, the community leadership in West Central Wisconsin appears to be quite well aware of its interests and how they are likely to be enhanced by liberal development policies. Overall, it is remarkable the extent to which community elites in this essentially underdeveloped region are attuned to the

problems and opportunities of the contemporary economy. The community elite data suggest that liberal development policies exhibit something of an emerging "corporate liberal" constituency--a constituency which supports a state-centralized integration of social classes and economic regions in the interests of business. This would seem to be a conducive structure for rationalizing--in the Weberian sense (see Collins, 1975)--the rural hinterland for large scale corporate production.

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FOOTNOTES

[1] We thus suggest that the community leader role shapes attitudes in ways that diverge from those of equally affluent non-elites. It also appears that many of the high income residents of Northwest Wisconsin have moved there recently, in many cases because the area is not developed industrially and provides a more pleasant residential environment than that available in large cities (Martinson and Schulman, 1975). By contrast, over 80 percent of the community elites have resided in their community more than 10 years. Thus, community elites and affluent non-elites may differ greatly in life styles and community development preferences.

[2] We find that elites with previous knowledge of growth centers' proposals tend to be those living in large communities, frequent participants in voluntary associations, and government employees.

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APP

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APPENDIX A

OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES

1. Support for the Growth Center Development Concept was measured in a slightly different way in the studies of the community elites and non-elites. In Martinson and Schulman's (1975) random sample survey, the following introductory statement was made: "Another proposal is that certain cities be designated as 'growth centers' and would receive additional support from state and federal agencies as well as from local taxes to expand their services to attract business and industry." This statement was followed with a question asking: "Do you favor or oppose this proposal in Northwest Wisconsin." The response to this question comprise the support for growth center development concept variable among the random sample survey respondents.

In the case of the interview schedule for the community elites, the growth centers' questions were preceded by this statement:

> Let me briefly explain the "growth center" idea. First, the purpose of the proposed plan is to provide more and better services for the people living in rural areas--including services which will tend to attract more business and industry. It would allow communities in these rural areas to provide enough employment so that young people will not be forced to leave the area in order to get good jobs. The State government feels that more jobs in rural areas will help Wisconsin get a balanced population--in other words, so that the population of the State will not continue to be concentrated more and more in just a few large cities. Because some communities have potential for growth, the State and Federal governments would like to help them develop that potential. However, the State does not have enough money to help every rural community grow and become an industrial-commercial center.
>
> The State government has proposed a plan which will attempt to solve the growth problems in West Central Wisconsin. One of the larger communities in each rural area will be chosen as a "growth

> center". Growth center communities would receive financial and technical aids from State and Federal agencies to supplement local tax revenues for providing services. This would allow growth center communities to expand their services in order to attract more business and industry. In return for these financial aids, the growth center communities will be expected to share some services with nearby communities which were not selected as growth centers. In this way, neighboring communities and townships will enjoy some of the benefits of economic development even though these communities did not grow very much themselves.

This introductory statement was followed by a subsequent question from which community elites' responses to support for the growth centers development concept were taken: "Do you generally favor or oppose this idea of "growth centers' in West Central Wisconsin?"

The introductory statements obviously differ greatly, at least in length, if not the extent of "salesmanship." Nevertheless, both statements stress the same industry-attracting parameter of growth centers, although the elites received a somewhat more complete explanation of the mechanics of growth centers' policy.

2. Support for Respondent's Community Being Designated a Growth Center was measured with an identical question in both samples: "Would you favor or oppose your community becoming a growth center?"

3. Support for a growth center being established in a neighboring community was also measured with the same question among both the community elites and the random sample: "Suppose your community was not chosen as a growth center. Would you favor or oppose a growth center within 25 or 30 miles of this community?"

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with this question:

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4. Support for general community service consolidation was measured with this question:

> Several communities in the Twin Cities areas have entered into a tax base sharing agreement which is designed to eliminate "cut throat" competition for new industry and tax base and also more equitably distribute the benefits, burdens, and risks of economic development among the cooperating communities. Under the plan, a certain percentage of all communities' property tax revenues are pooled to provide services which attract new business and industry to the area--and not just to any one community. Do you generally favor or oppose this type of arrangement for this region of Wisconsin?

This and all subsequent variables were measured only among the community elites.

5. Support for service consolidation for low growth potential counties (among community elites only) was measured with this question:

> Counties with little growth potential might be able to make local agreements between themselves and neighboring counties in order to share the costs of providing better services. In other words, several counties might get together to provide trash and garbage disposal, better law enforcement, doctors and medical treatment, etc. Do you favor or oppose this idea?

6. Previous knowledge of growth centers' proposals was determined by asking:

> During the past year the State of Wisconsin has been working on an economic development plan for the rural regions of the State. The proposed plan stresses the establishment of "growth centers" in these rural regions. Have you ever heard of the growth center proposal?

This question preceded the statement about the nature of growth centers policy mentioned earlier. Persons answering "yes" were given a score of one and the residual a score of zero. Likewise, the five previous liberal development policy variables were scored as dummy variables for the zero-order correlation analysis. In each case, persons favoring the given proposal were assigned a score of one, and the residual was assigned a score of zero (including persons definitely opposing the given proposal, persons not sure, and missing data).

7. 8. Community population size and community socioeconomic status were derived from 1970 U.S. Census data for cities and minor civil divisions. Community population size was defined in terms of the actual population size of the city or minor civil divisions, and each respondent was assigned the score corresponding with the 1970 population size of his/her community. Community socioeconomic status was operationalized as the proportion of the adult (25 years of age or older) population in the respondent's community with eight or less years of formal education. Because this is a "reverse indicator," the reciprocal of the proportion of community adults with eight or less years of education was derived, and the appropriate score assigned to each individual from the community.

. 9. 10. 11. 12. Education, income, employer, age, and political party preference were measured with direct questions asking for number of years of schooling completed, total family income, current occupation and employer, age in years, and political party preference, respectively. Education was operationalized in terms of the midpoint of the income category chosen. Age was defined operationally as the exact age in years. Republican and Democratic Party preferences were defined as dummy variables with, for example, persons identifying as a Republican assigned a score of one, and the residual a score of zero. Employer was also defined in terms of three dummy variables: government employee, self-employed business person, and salaried employee of a business.

13. Welfare-state liberalism was operationalized as a three-item Likert scale. The constituent items were: "Are you for a federal health insurance program covering men and women of all ages;" "Are you for a guaranteed annual income." Each of these items was administered with a semantic differential format, with persons most strongly supporting each statement given high scores.

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ly supporting each statement given high scores.

14. Liberalism vis-a-vis state regulation of business was also operationalized as a three-item Likert scale, consisting of the following items: "Are you for less government regulation of business;" "Government laws and regulations should primarily ensure the prosperity of business, since the health of the nation is dependent upon the well-being of business;" and "Are you for revising the tax structure so that the burden falls more heavily on corporations and those with large incomes." These items were administered with a semantic differential format, again with persons most strongly favoring a given statement assigned a high score.

15. Support for environmental reform was measured with a two-item Likert-type scale. The constituent items were: 1) "If an industry cannot control its pollution, it should be forced to shut down, even if a large number of people would lose their jobs," and 2) "New industry in this part of the state will mean more income and jobs, but it might also lead to an increase in air and water pollution. Thinking about your own community, if a company wanted to set up a new plant nearby creating many new, well-paying jobs, would you favor or oppose this plant if it would bring a substantial increase in air and water pollution?"

The first item was a semantic differential item--i.e., respondents were asked to strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree--and was scored from one to five, with high scores indicating agreement with shutting down industrial polluters. Respondents who gave "don't know" or no response were assigned a score of three. The second item was also scored from one to five; persons who opposed the plant were assigned a score of five, persons who favored the plant were given a score of one, and respondents who neither favored nor opposed the new industrial plant were assigned a score of three.

TABLE 1. Support for the Growth Center Development Concept Among Community Elites and Non-Elites (Percentages).

	Community Elites		Non-Elites*		
Response	Total Sample (N=231)	St. Croix County (N=22)	Total Sample (N=393)	St. Croix County (N=195)	High Income (N-58)
Favor	76	82	48	47	42
Oppose	20	14	34	37	48
Not Sure, Not Ascertained	4	5	17	16	10
Totals**	100	101	99	100	100

*SOURCE: Martinson and Schulman (1975).

**Totals differ from 100 due to rounding error.

TABLE 2. Support for Respondent's
Center Among Community El

	Community El	
Response	Total Sample (N=231)	St. Cou (N=
Favor	73	8
Oppose	24	1
Not Sure, Not Ascertained	3	
Totals	100	10

*SOURCE: Martinson and Schulm

Center Development Concept
and Non-Elites (Percentages).

	Non-Elites*		
oix	Total Sample (N=393)	St. Croix County (N=195)	High Income (N-58)
	48	47	42
	34	37	48
	17	16	10
	99	100	100

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TABLE 2. Support for Respondent's Community Being Designated a Growth Center Among Community Elites and Non-Elites (Percentages).

	Community Elites		Non-Elites		
Response	Total Sample (N=231)	St. Croix County (N=22)	Total Sample (N=393)	St. Croix County (N=195)	High Income (N=58)
Favor	73	82	40	38	28
Oppose	24	18	46	52	67
Not Sure, Not Ascertained	3	0	14	10	5
Totals	100	100	100	100	100

*SOURCE: Martinson and Schulman (1975).

TABLE 3. Support for a Growth Center Being Established in a Neighboring Community, If the Respondent's Community is Not Chosen as a Growth Center, Among Community Elites and Non-Elites (Percentages).

	Community Elites		Non-Elites*		
Response	Total Sample (N=231)	St. Croix County (N=22)	Total Sample (N=393)	St. Croix County (N=195)	High Income (N=58)
Favor	68	77	64	69	63
Oppose	28	23	24	21	32
Not Sure, Not Ascertained	4	0	12	10	5
Totals	100	100	100	100	100

*SOURCE: Martinson and Schulman (1975).

TABLE 4. Support for Government Se
Among Community Elites (F

Response	General Communit Service Consolid
Favor	74
Oppose	22
Not Sure, Not Ascertained	5
Totals*	101

*Totals differ from 100 due to

TABLE 5. Intercorrelations Between Previous Knowledge of Growth Center Proposals and Liberal Development Policy Preferences Among Community Elites (Zero-Order Pearsonian Correlation Coefficients).*

	X 1	X 2	X 3	X 4	X 5	X 6
X 1 = Previous Knowledge of Growth Center Proposals	--					
X 2 = Support for General Growth Center Concept	093	--				
X 3 = Support for Respondent's Community Being Designated a Growth Center	051	592	--			
X 4 = Support for Neighboring Community Being Designated a Growth Center	-039	600	373	--		
X 5 = Support for General Community Service Consolidation	003	257	191	235	--	
X 6 = Support for Service Consolidation for Low Growth Potential Counties	-190	246	156	185	184	--

*Decimals omitted. A zero-order correlation coefficient of ± .129 is statistically significant at the .05 level, with a two-tailed test of significance.

TABLE 6. Relationships Between Selected Independent Variables and Support for Liberal Development Policies Among Community Elites (Zero-Order Pearsonian Correlation Coefficients).*

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable: Support for General Growth Center's Concept	Support for Respondent's Community Being Designated a Growth Center	Support for Neighboring Community Being Designated a Growth Center	Support for General Community Service Consolidation	Support for Service Consolidation for Low Growth Potential Counties
COMMUNITY CONTEXTUAL CHARACTERISTICS					
Community Population Size	.087	.147*	-.137*	-.013	-.075
Community Socioeconomic Status	.141*	.118	.054	.044	.044
RESPONDENT'S SOCIAL STRUCTURAL AND ATTITUDINAL CHARACTERISTICS:					
Education	-.064	-.114	-.116	-.045	-.085

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...een Previous Knowledge of Growth Center Development Policy Preferences Among ...o-Order Pearsonian Correlation Coefficients).*

	X 1	X 2	X 3	X 4	X 5	X 6
...th	--					
	093	--				
	051	592	--			
	-039	600	373	--		
...n	003	257	191	235	--	
	-190	246	156	185	184	--

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	Dependent Variable				
Independent Variable	Support for General Growth Center's Concept	Support for Respondent's Community Being Designated a Growth Center	Support for Neighboring Community Being Designated a Growth Center	Support for General Community Service Consolidation	Support for Service Consolidation for Low Growth Potential Counties
COMMUNITY CONTEXTUAL CHARACTERISTICS					
Community Population Size	.087	.147*	-.137*	-.013	-.075
Community Socioeconomic Status	.141*	.118	.054	.044	.044
RESPONDENT'S SOCIAL STRUCTURAL AND ATTITUDINAL CHARACTERISTICS:					
Education	-.064	-.114	-.116	-.045	-.085
Income	.121	.144*	-.018	.065	.011
Government Employee	-.034	-.104	-.040	-.110	.045
Self-Employed Businessperson	-.035	.094	.041	.067	-.03
Salaried Business Employee	.025	.024	-.033	-.025	-.026
Age	-.051	.090	.011	-.046	.038
Republican	-.047	-.109	-.011	-.040	-.121
Democrat	.067	-.041	.033	.051	-.033
Welfare-State Liberalism	.219*	.158*	.119	.183*	.255*
Liberalism vis-a-vis State Regulation of Business	.063	-.080	.057	.063	.098
Support for Environmental Reform	-.032	-.150*	.019	-.075	-.024

*A zero-order correlation coefficient of ± .130 is statistically significant at the .05 level, with a two-tailed test of significance.

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…ndent's Community is Not Chosen as a
…mmunity Elites and Non-Elites (Percentages).

…lites	Non-Elites*		
…. Croix …ounty …=22)	Total Sample (N=393)	St. Croix County (N=195)	High Income (N=58)
77	64	69	63
23	24	21	32
0	12	10	5
…00	100	100	100

…man (1975).

TABLE 4. Support for Government Service Consolidation Policies Among Community Elites (Percentages).

	Policy	
Response	General Community Service Consolidation	Service Consolidation for Low Growth Potential Counties
Favor	74	88
Oppose	22	11
Not Sure, Not Ascertained	5	0
Totals*	101	99

*Totals differ from 100 due to rounding errors.